

FIELD
MESSAGE

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U. S. INFORMATION SERVICE

FROM: USIS-BOIN

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TO: USIA WASHINGTON

MESSAGE NO

REF: USIA CA-1465 December 6, 1963

February 18, 1966

DATE

SUBJECT: Third Country Reporting on Viet-Nam

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Arno Scholz, Publisher and Chief Editor of the West Berlin TELEGRAPH (pro-SPD), who has just returned from a visit to South Vietnam, made extensive observations on his visit in an article published by his paper on Sunday, Feb. 6.

The article was also circulated to news media throughout the Federal Republic as a press release by the Social Democratic press service, PEP. The following excerpts are taken from the PEP release:

"The conflict in South Vietnam takes place on two levels. Arms are used to repel the aggressor. However, armed force alone is not enough to protect South Vietnam from being taken over by the Communists. Only successful efforts to improve the living standard and the health of the people and to establish democratic order in the country will make the people of South Vietnam immune against communism.

"Such constructive efforts are so difficult because the country has had no stable government for twenty years, i.e., since it rid itself of colonial rule. This is the reason for the absence of effective administration and the absence of relations of confidence between the people and their government.

"At present, there is no parliament (in Saigon) but only a group of nine generals who have established a government. One of these nine generals, General Ky, was appointed by them to the position of President. However, General Ky does not seem to be liked either by the soldiers or by the people.

"Obviously urged by the Americans who wish to see a parliament and a government established in an orderly way, these nine generals have started restoring order in the country and making first steps toward permitting elections in an attempt at gradually establishing the basis for democratic legitimization of the government.

"Communal elections have been held in several cities, and voters obviously turned out in great numbers. Other communities will have elections before the end of the year and a national parliament is scheduled to be elected next year...."

USIS-PA: John A. Jones

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DATE
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FILE NO.
FROM: SIS BUREAU

"Refugee figures prove that the Communist regime in North Vietnam is unpopular. The people in South Vietnam know from the refugees what fate they would face if they were deprived of their protection..."

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"For some time the Viet Cong have been feared rather than admired. There are three major reasons for this decisive change. Since the Viet Cong obviously are finding less support now, they have to resort to compulsory recruitment. They cannot expect sympathy on the part of either the young recruited men or their families. The Viet Cong demand too many "taxes" and frequently take very cruel action. They have murdered teachers who ignored their directives to discontinue teaching, killed village elders who tried to maintain an administration. In such a situation, no one can be blamed for not daring to support the government openly."

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"The Americans have made advisers available to help the people in areas cleared of the Viet Cong to rebuild destroyed bridges and roads and to promote the production of rice and fruits. Moreover, they are distributing food and clothing and offering medical care especially for children. They are doing all this to make the people participate in the reconstruction of the country...."

.....
"American advisers are active in many fields. They also are trying to develop industries in an attempt at establishing a secure basis of existence for the people. However, they would like to avoid the impression of being the only ones who are helping. That is why they wish to see "more flags" in South Vietnam. They would like to see the European peoples taking joint action in the field of medical care..."

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"The ruler of North Vietnam, Ho Chi Minh, is waiting for South Vietnam to be left in the lurch so he could include the country in his communist people's republic. He has a very plausible reason, as he needs the rice fields of South Vietnam to improve the living standard of the people under his rule."

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"Ho Chi Minh would like to go down in history as the liberator of his country from French colonial rule. However, he obviously would not like to play the role of Ulbright and surrender the country to Red China or to the Soviet Union. It seems doubtful that he will succeed in becoming the Tito of Asia. Ho Chi Minh has also misappraised the strategy of the Americans. They know now that the pacification of South Vietnam can be achieved only in very wearisome actions against the Viet Cong and that great efforts will be required for this purpose. Before making such efforts, the Americans intend to exhaust all possibilities of bringing about a peaceful settlement."

Albert E. Hausing
Albert E. Hausing
Public Affairs Officer

cc: JUSPAO, Saigon

COORDINATION:

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